

Welcome to your Date Night Experience!

Congratulations on prioritizing one another— After all, your relationship needs you!

To get the most out of each date we have made the following suggestions:

♥ Stay positive!

This is not the time to tell the other what he or she has done wrong.

Be future focused. Focus on what you want your relationship to be like in the future. Don't concentrate on past failures. (It's okay to remember past successes).

Talk about your relationship. Do not talk about your job, children, in-laws, etc., unless it's part of the topic of the date.

♥ Give a gift of love.

Some discussion items will excite you more than others. On the less exciting ones, give a gift of love.

Participate enthusiastically!

Don't force it. If you get on a negative track, stop that discussion. Move on to another topic that you both feel good about.

♥ If you get stuck, ask for help.

If an issue comes up that you can't handle together, talk to a marriage coach at a local church or counseling center.

♥ Use good communication skills.

Be prepared for some surprises and new insights about each other. They can open new opportunities for growth and intimacy in your relationship. The following are several specific tips for a great date experience:

1. Be honest, yet never unkind.
2. Remember to start your sentences with "I" and let them reflect back on you.
3. Resist attacking the other or defending yourself.
4. Be specific and positive.



Dessert

The Perfect Ending

Creating A Safe Place

Security is experienced more deeply in a relationship when your partner finds that it is a safe place to be REAL—to be vulnerable, without fear of defensiveness, criticism or retaliation.

Mission Possible: When you're ready, take turns asking this question: *As you reviewed the ten growth areas, is there one more area that you would love to see changed in my life?*

Brace yourself! No defensiveness or justification. You can respond with words like: *"Thanks for sharing that with me. I'll look forward to doing a better job in that area."*

When it's your turn to give your partner feedback about an additional area of needed growth, here's a great way to gently convey your hopes:

It would mean a lot to me if you would think about giving more attention to. . .

Celebrate: You've Just Been Loved!

You've just heard your partner's acknowledgement of their needed growth and then you were given the opportunity to give gentle feedback. That's a gift of love!

When we have the certainty that our partner has an openness to change, we feel more Secure!

Provided in partnership with:



DATE NIGHT MENU

*Love Gives
Security*





Appetizers

Starting Right

Celebrating

Love deepens when it rests securely. To be Secure is to be at peace in your relationship, experience harmony, confidence and trust, to be free from fear and harm.

Let's begin by celebrating the dimensions of Security you're already experiencing in your relationship.

Take turns celebrating completing two or three of these sentences:

- ♥ *In our marriage, I'm Secure that...*
- ♥ *I don't worry about you...*
- ♥ *I am not anxious about...*
- ♥ *I am at peace concerning...*
- ♥ *I'm so glad that we are generally in agreement and/or in harmony about...*

As your partner celebrates—celebrate with them:

- ♥ *I'm excited to hear that...*
- ♥ *I'm glad that's true because...*
- ♥ *Thanks for sharing that...*



Main Course

Being Vulnerable

Improving Security

An important ingredient in deepening the experience of Security in your relationship is to identify your own "growth areas" and vulnerably assume responsibility for improvement!

There are several common growth areas that help bring added Security. Review them privately and then vulnerably share at least one area that you want to improve.

A Deeper Understanding

Security in a relationship is improved when:

- ♥ I fulfill my daily responsibilities at home... without being reminded
- ♥ I work to "smooth out" my mood swings... being more predictable in my emotions
- ♥ I "remember more" and "forget less" of what is important to you
- ♥ I improve my part in our financial journey together
- ♥ I offer more apologies when I know I've wronged you in some way
- ♥ I better control my irritations, frustrations and anger
- ♥ I am more consistent in keeping commitments... not changing plans
- ♥ I engage (with you) in resolving conflicts... rather than avoiding them

Let's Talk About it

In reviewing the list of 8 possible growth areas that are listed in the **A Deeper Understanding** section, which area needs improvement for you? Share this with your partner:

Because I want you to experience more Security in our relationship, I know that I need to give more attention to _____.

(For example: *Because I want you to experience more Security in our relationship, I know that I need to give more attention to offer more apologies when I've wronged you in some way.*)

As your partner shares—avoid criticism. Instead, thank your partner for their desire to change.